

	Health Services Unit Level I Internal Management Procedures	Internal Management Procedure # MED.IMA.008
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<b>Internal Management Procedure Title:</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community Release Medical Evaluation</b></p>		
<b>Effective Date:</b> June 1, 2005	<b>Revised/Reviewed:</b> August 2012	<b>Authority:</b> NJ DOC PS MED.001.008
<b>Promulgating Office:</b> Health Services Unit  <a href="#">Authentication Statement</a>		<b>Professional Association Standard cited:</b>
<b>Applicability:</b> This Internal Management Procedure applies to all Medical Unit Staff of all DOC Institutions.		
<b>Supersedes:</b> N/A		
<b>Review Schedule:</b> This document is scheduled for annual review on or about August 2013.		

## I PURPOSE

To establish a mechanism for the proper documentation of an inmate's readiness for community release.

## II DEFINITIONS

The following words and terms, when used in this policy, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

**Community Release** means inmates who are being sent to a Residential Community Release Agreement Program (RCRP) in inmate status.

**Residential Community Release Agreement Program (RCRP)** means Assessment and Treatment Centers, Halfway Houses, or Substance Use Disorder Treatment Program under contract with the New Jersey Department of Corrections.



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**Community Release Clearance** means medical and dental certification approving or disapproving the inmate for participation in a residential community program. Factors to be considered in clearance are outlined in Procedure E below.

**Office of Community Programs** means a unit of the New Jersey Department of Corrections under the Division of Programs and Community Services responsible for all RCRPs and appropriate inmate assignments and assessments.

### III POLICY

The New Jersey Department of Corrections mandates that prior to inmates being released into Residential Community Release Programs (Halfway Houses, MAP Program, etc.) they shall be medically evaluated to determine their suitability for congregate living and the need for the healthcare provider to communicate any special medical problems/needs of an inmate. This evaluation will describe the employability of the inmate, list any work limitations, the current medications, pending treatments/diagnostics and any/all limitations due to medical condition or chronic illness.

### IV PROCEDURES

- A. The inmate will sign the form MR-247, Authorization to Disclose Information to the NJ State Parole Board and/or Community Release Programs, if this has not already been done. If signed, the original form should be found in the inmate's Medical Reference File. The form MR-247 authorizes the release of medical information for 12 months after the form is signed, and is to be signed during the inmate's first pre-parole psychological evaluation.
- B. The Medical Department will receive notification from the Classification Department of the need to complete a Community Release Medical Evaluation on an inmate. This process will be used for any inmate in custody who is about to be released into either a Halfway House/Boot Camp/MAP Program, etc. The Medical Department has seven (7) days to schedule the inmate for the completion of the medical evaluation and return the report to Classification. When the nursing or medical record staff gets a request from Classification for Community Release Medical Evaluation, they will review the inmate's electronic medical record (EMR) to see if the document has already been completed. If so, the document can be reprinted and sent to Classification. If no document is found, the inmate is scheduled for the medical evaluation with the MD/NP.
- C. A Community Release Medical Evaluation will be honored for a period not to exceed twelve months from the date of completion, but is subject to confirmation at the time of release as described in section H below.



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- D. A physician/NP and a dentist need to complete and sign the Community Release Medical Evaluation. The MD/NP review and update the record as necessary. *An in-person meeting with the inmate is not required, however if the clinician believes that there are medical complications then an in-person meeting with the inmate should be scheduled.* A physical exam is only required if one is not current, (see IMP "Periodic Health Assessment"). The MD/NP then completes the Community Release Medical Evaluation encounter in the EMR then routes the signed electronic document to the dentist. The dentist will append the document with comments about dental work in progress. The dentist will then forward the document to the Director of Nurses/Designee who will review the document for completeness. The Director of Nurses/Designee will forward the completed document to Classification. Classification will forward the medical clearance to the Institutional Community Release Coordinator.
- E. The following factors will be considered and reported as part of Community Release Medical Evaluation of the inmate when making the decision for clearance:
1. Clear to be medically managed away from main facility (including clear of pending diagnostic work-ups or treatments such as impending surgery, specialty care appointments or tests);
    - Inmates undergoing active diagnostic work-up, pending surgery, or initial treatment regimens (e.g., Hepatitis C treatment), should not be cleared until they are completed;
    - However, inmates being managed for chronic illnesses (HTN, Diabetes, HIV, etc.) may be cleared if maintained on the treatment regimen in a stable manner.
  2. Clear as medically capable to participate in therapeutic programming activities, such as school and employment off-site;
  3. List all medical and work limitations of the inmate, such as;
    - No food handling,
    - Light duty,
    - No work around machinery;
    - Wheelchair bound,
    - Insulin dependent, etc.;
  4. List all Medication(s), such as psychotropic and addictive medication and any chronic medications;
  5. List all chronic illnesses and report on severity, as the illness alone may not



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disqualify an individual unless the condition requires frequent intervention or close medical monitoring, such as uncontrolled diabetes and unstable asthma.

- F. Comments are to be added to the electronic Community Release Medical Evaluation by using the drop down boxes and by typing onto the unsigned form directly. Enough information should be provided by the physician/NP/dentist so that the Office of Community Programs can have the information needed to make appropriate program assignments. An explanation of pending care, specialty care appointments, tests and/or chronic conditions shall be provided.
- G. Facilities will maintain their logbook to indicate when community release medical evaluations are completed.
- H. When an inmate is actually scheduled to leave the facility, the Medical Department will receive a Notice of Transfer from the Community Release Coordinator 48 to 72 hours prior to the inmate leaving the facility. Prior to release, the Charge Nurse/RN designee will review the inmate's chart to determine if there are any changes in the inmate's condition since his/her last Community Release Medical Evaluation.
  - This review and findings will be documented in the EMR, by appending the original clearance. If the Charge Nurse/RN designee determines that the inmate's condition has changed, the MD/NP shall be notified immediately of the changes and this information will also be documented in the inmate's EMR.
  - If the MD/NP determines (based on the criteria set forth above) that the changes in the inmate's condition would prevent or should delay the inmate from being released into the RCRP, the Community Release Coordinator shall be notified immediately (so that the inmate is not released to the RCRP).
  - The chart note shall detail the reason for the retraction of any previous clearance and indicate eligibility time for review of clearance, if applicable. Chart note will be printed and forwarded to the Community Release Coordinator, and communicated verbally. This note may be from the Physician/NP, or RN who discussed any changes with the Physician/NP.
  - **Inmates transferring to an Assessment Center will be provided with fourteen (14) days of medication by the NJDOC medical contractor.**
  - **Inmates transferring from an Assessment Center to another RCRP will be provided with not less than fourteen (14) days of medication by the Assessment Center vender (currently CEC).**



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- The Community Release Coordinator is responsible to ask medical to revisit the clearance within the timeframe indicated in the chart note.
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#### **V CROSS REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND DOCPS/IMP**

<b>DOCPS/IMP/Document</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Effective/Revision</b>
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<b>Number</b>		<b>Date</b>
NJ DOC PS # MED.001.008	<i>Inmate Medical Appraisals</i>	May 15, 2005

#### **VI     Applicable Forms**

<b>Form Number</b>	<b>Form Title</b>	<b>Effective/Revision Date</b>
MR 247	<i>Authorization to Disclose Information to the NJ State Parole Board and/or Community Release Programs</i>	November 7, 2003